

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 THE HA 02812 211727Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 STR-04 COME-00 IO-13 OES-06

HEW-04 (ISO) W

----- 038670

R 211400Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8220

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE THE HAGUE 2812

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NL

SUBJ: POLITICS DUTCH STYLE

1. SUMMARY: DUTCH CABINET HAS SKATED DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO EDGE OF BREAKUP IN LAST SEVERAL DAYS, BUT CONTINUE TO HOLD TOGETHER. NUMBER OF PROBLEMS REMAIN TO BE SETTLED AND OUTCOME IS STILL UNCERTAIN BUT IT IS INCREASINGLY APPARENT THAT AVERSION TO LETTING GOVERNMENT FALL IS VERY STRONG. END SUMMARY.

2. A NUMBER OF DISTINCT BUT PAINFUL ISSUES HAVE GIVEN DUTCH COALITION LONG ACCUSTOMED TO FLIRTING WITH DISSOLUTION MORE THAN ITS NORMAL SHARE OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITHIN PAST FEW DAYS. CABINET HAS MET OFF AND ON SOMETIMES MORE THAN ONCE IN SAME DAY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 THE HA 02812 211727Z

AND OFTEN INTO EARLY HOURS OF MORNING TO DISCUSS A SERIES OF

SEPARATE PROBLEMS: QUESTION OF A CREDIT GUARANTEE FOR DUTCH FIRMS PARTICIPATING IN US AND SWISS CONSORTIUM FOR CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA; AN ANTI-SQUATTERS BILL; THE JUSTICE MINISTERS DECISION TO CLOSE AN ABORTION CLINIC; FINDING PLACES TO ECONOMIZE IN NEXT YEARS BUDGET: AND THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC SOCIAL POLICY PLAN (STRUKTUURNOTA). NONE OF THE PROBLEMS SEEMS TO BE COMPLETELY RESOLVED AT THE MOMENT. THE CABINET MET AGAIN MAY 20 WITH YET ANOTHER MEETING SCHEDULED FOR TODAY. THE TOUCH ABORTION ISSUE WILL PROBABLY BE ALLOWED TO COOL OFF OVER THE WEEKEND AND DECISION ON OTHER ISSUES MAY BE POSTPONED AS WELL.

3. EMBASSY HAS REPORTED IN SOME DETAIL ON DELIBERATIONS CONCERNING THE EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN PROJECTS. AT LAST READING THE CABINET STILL HAS NOT FINALLY DECIDED ON ITS POSITION ALTHOUGH ALL INDICATIONS POINT TO A DECISION DENYING THE GUARANTEE, FORCING DUTCH CONSORTIUM MEMBERS TO SEEK CREDIT ON MORE COSTLY OPEN MARKET. THE CABINET WHICH HAD BEEN SPLIT EVENLY ON THE QUESTION (EIGHT-EIGHT) BUT WITH AN ADDITIONAL TIE BREAKING VOTE AGAINST THE GUARANTEE IN THE HANDS OF THE PRIME MINISTER HAS NOW APPARENTLY DIVIDED NINE SEVEN AGAINST AS A RESULT OF PRIME MINISTER DUISSENBERG'S SHIFT. THE UNWILLINGNESS OF THE LEFT WING MEMBERS OF THE GOVT TO GO ALONG WITH THE GUARANTEE HAS DEEPLY EMBITTERED THE CATHOLIC ECONOMIC MINISTER LUBBERS, WHO HAD CAREFULLY WORKED OUT THE PLAN IN CONSULTATION AND IN APPARENT AGREEMENT WITH THE LAB MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FINANCE, ONLY TO SEE IT FALL APART AT THE LAST MOMENT. ONCE A NEGATIVE DECISION IS ANNOUNCED, THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT LIBERALS OR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS MAY RAISE ISSUE IN THE PARLIAMENT. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT EVEN THOUGH A NEGATIVE DECISION WILL BE EXTREMELY PAINFUL FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MINISTERS TO BEAR NEITHER THEY NOR THEIR PARLIAMENTARY COLLEAGUES ARE LIKELY TO MAKE IT A QUESTION OF GOVERNMENTAL SURVIVAL.

4. IF DENIAL OF EXPORT CREDITS TO SOUTH AFRICA IS PROVING PAINFUL FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS IN THE GOVT, TWO MEASURES ADOPTED BY CATHOLIC JUSTICE MINISTER (THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER) VAN AGT ARE JUST AS PAINFUL FOR THE DUTCH LEFT. THE LESS IMPORTANT OF THE TWO WAS HIS INTRODUCTION OF AN ANTI SQUATTERS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 THE HA 02812 211727Z

BILL INTO THE PARLIAMENT. IN RECENT YEARS IT HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY COMMON FOR UNOCCUPIED HOUSING AND OTHER BUILDINGS TO BE SEIZED BY PEOPLE SEEKING HOUSING. THE SQUATTERS ARE MAINLY YOUNGER PEOPLE AND MANY OF THEM SET UP COMMUNAL HOUSEKEEPING IN THE BUILDINGS. A GROUP HAS EVEN ORGANIZED TO IDENTIFY EMPTY PROPERTIES AND TO ACT AS A REFERRAL SERVICE. VAN AGT'S BILL WOULD MAKE SUCH OCCUPATION ILLEGAL.

5. MORE SERIOUS WAS HIS DECISION THREE DAYS AGO TO CLOSE DOWN AN ILLEGAL ABORTION CLINIC WHICH WAS OPERATING NEAR HAARLEM. HIS MOVE APPARENTLY TAKEN WITHOUT CONSULTING OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GOVT, ABROGATED AN AGREEMENT THAT HE AND THE LABOR PARTY'S HEALTH MIN HAD MADE WITH PARLIAMENT LAST FALL. THAT AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE ALLOWED THE CLINIC TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE, ALTHOUGH ABORTIONS ARE ILLEGAL, UNTIL THE PARLIAMENT COULD PASS ONE OF THE THREE ABORTION BILLS WHICH ARE PENDING. ON MAY 19 THE PARLIAMENT VOTED 75-47 FOR A LABOR PARTY BILL (SUPPORTED BY OTHER LEFT WING PARTIES AND THE OPPOSITION LIBERALS) FOR A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE JUSTICE MIN TO LET THE COURTS DECIDE THE ISSUE. VAN AGT REJECTED THE RESOLUTION AND STATED THAT HE WOULD NOT CARRY IT OUT. THE CLINIC IS APPARENTLY STILL OPEN, AND THE MATTER HAD RAISED TEMPER TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT A NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARIANS STOOD WATCH DURING THE NIGHT OF MAY 19 TO TRY TO PREVENT POLICE ACTION TO SHUT IT DOWN.

6. ON TOP OF ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS (WHICH PROBABLY APPEAR MINOR TO OUTSIDERS) THE GOVT IS ALSO GRAPPLING WITH FAR RANGING ECONOMIC PROPOSALS CUTTING BACK ON RAPIDLY RAISING SOCIAL EXPENDITURES AND AT THE SAME TIME TRYING TO MEET CONTINUING DEFENSE COMMITMENTS. ANOTHER ISSUE WITH WHICH THE CABINET HAS BEEN FACED FOR SOME TIME IS THE PUBLICATION OF ITS LONG TERM SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PLAN. THIS "STRUKTUURNOTA" ALREADY HAS BEEN DELAYED SOME MONTHS BECAUSE OF INTERNAL CABINET DISAGREEMENT.

7. THAT TEMPER ARE HIGH IS UNDERSTANDABLE GIVEN THE FACT THAT ALL OF THESE LOCALLY IMPORTANT ISSUES HAVE COME UP AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME TIME. IT IS BY NO MEANS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION THAT THE GOVT WILL FALL OVER ANY ONE OR OVER ANY COMBINATION OF THE ISSUES. NONE OF THE MAJOR PARTIES ARE READY TO FACE THE ELECTION PREMATURELY, LEAST OF ALL THE CONFESSORIAL PARTIES WHO HAVE YET TO PULL THEMSELVES TOGETHER INTO A SINGLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 THE HA 02812 211727Z

PARTY. DESPITE THE REVERSES THAT TWO OF ITS MEMBERS LUBBERS AND VAN AGT, HAVE SUFFERED IN RECENT DAYS, THERE IS LITTLE TALK OF BRING THE GOVT DOWN ON THE PART OF THE CATHOLICS, ALTHOUGH HAVING THEIR JUSTICE MIN TAKE SUCH A FORTHRIGHT STAND ON ABORTION MIGHT GIVE THEM A SHOT IN THE ARM. AS THEIR PARTY FORTUNES HAVE SLIPPED MORE THAN MOST IN RECENT YEARS, THE CATHOLICS NEED MORE THAN A TEMPORARY BOOST AND HAVE PINNED ALL OF THEIR HOPES ON UNIFICATION WITH THE TWO LARGE PROTESTANT PARTIES.

8. PRIMIN DEN UYL IS A MASTER AT FINDING COMPROMISE POSSIBILITIES IN HIS CABINET AND REGULARLY LETS THINGS DRIFT DELIBERATELY RATHER THAN TAKING IMMEDIATE ACTION. SPEAKING TO A LABOR PARTY MEETING MAY 20, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION WAS THE MOST TESTING FOR HIS GOVT IN ITS THREE YEAR

TERM. BUT HE SAID NOW WAS NOT THE TIME TO PANIC.

9. ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS PRETTY CLEAR THAT THE CABINET WILL END UP
DECIDING AGAINST THE EXPORT CREDITS IN THE SO AFRICAN CASE, IT
MAY DECIDE TO TEMPORIZE. THE NEWS THA THE SFRC SUBCOMMITTEE
ON AFRICAN RELATIONS WILL HOLD HEARINGS IN WASHINGTON BEGINNING
NEXT WEEK COULD TEMPT THE DUTHC CABINET TO SLOW DOWN ITS CON-
SIDERATION OF THE ISSUE. ONE POSSIBLE WAY OUT WOULD BE TO AVOID
THE CRUNCHIN THE HAGUE UNTIL IT IS CLEARER HOW WASHINGTON WILL
DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM.
GOULD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COALITION GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976THEHA02812
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760200-0002
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760526/aaaaawiu.tel
Line Count: 179
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <02 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICS DUTCH STYLE
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006